Why Should I Exercise During Pregnancy?

Staying active during pregnancy will help you to slow weight gain and will result in a healthier pregnancy and delivery. Exercise is safe for most pregnant women. Talk to your health care provider to find out what type of exercise is safe for you.

Benefits of exercise during pregnancy:

- Slows weight gain
- Helps with constipation, backaches
- Improves sleep
- Gives you more energy
- Improves mood
- Easier time losing weight after delivery

Note: Women who exercise during pregnancy may have shorter labors and easier deliveries.

Guidelines for Exercise in Pregnancy

- Avoid contact sports, activities that increase your risk of falling and jerky, bouncing movements
- Don’t exercise on your back after the 1st trimester
- Avoid working out in very hot weather
- Exercise on all or most days of the week
- Warm up and cool down
- Take frequent breaks and drink plenty of fluids
- Never exercise to the point of exhaustion

References:

Pregnancy weight gain: What's healthy?
http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/pregnancy-weight-gain/pr00111

Healthy Eating during Pregnancy.
http://www.foodinsight.org/Content/6/RevisedHealthyEatingPregnancy809.pdf

Keeping Fit.. http://www.womenshealth.gov/pregnancy/you-are-pregnant/staying-healthy-safe.cfm#b

Utah WIC Program
1-877-WIC-KIDS
www.health.utah.gov/wic

Revised 8/10

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.
How Much Total Weight Should I Gain?

The right amount of weight to gain during pregnancy depends on how much you weighed before getting pregnant. Talk with your health care provider to find out what amount is right for you.

General Guidelines:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prepregnancy BMI</th>
<th>BMI (kg/m²)</th>
<th>Total Weight Gain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underweight</td>
<td>&lt;18.5</td>
<td>28-40 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal Weight</td>
<td>18.5-24.9</td>
<td>25-35 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overweight</td>
<td>25-29.9</td>
<td>15-25 pounds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obese</td>
<td>≥ 30</td>
<td>11-20 pounds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Women pregnant with multiples: Normal weight women should gain 37-54 pounds, overweight, 31-50 pounds and obese, 25-42 pounds during pregnancy.

Risks of Gaining Too Much Weight

*Women who gain extra weight during pregnancy are more likely to have...*

- Gestational diabetes and high blood pressure
- Backaches, leg pain and varicose veins
- A cesarean section or other problems with delivery due to a larger than normal baby
- Trouble returning to prepregnancy weight
- Long term health problems from obesity

**Note:** Gaining too much weight during pregnancy increases the baby's risk of being overweight during childhood.

Tips to slow weight gain:

- Eat according to MyPyramid (for more information, go to www.MyPyramid.gov)
  - Make half your grains whole
  - Vary your veggies
  - Focus on fruit
  - Get your calcium-rich foods (choose low-fat dairy products)
  - Go lean with protein

- Eat small, frequent meals
- Choose healthy snacks (fresh fruits, raw vegetables, low-fat yogurt or cottage cheese, whole wheat toast …)
- Limit processed foods
- Exercise

**Note:** Pregnancy only requires 200-300 extra calories per day.

What Can I Do To Slow Weight Gain?

If you’re gaining more weight than recommended, you’ll want to make some changes to your diet. You should never try to lose weight during pregnancy. But if you can slow down how quickly you gain weight for the rest of your pregnancy, you’ll have less problems with your pregnancy and delivery, and an easier time getting back to your prepregnancy weight.